

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 7:30 p.m., September 23, 1997.

Members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Councilman H. Davis Ballard; Vice Mayor Larry D. Brookshier; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilwoman Linda Kochendarfer; Councilman W. D. Tharp; and Councilman Robert T. Wandrei.

Members absent: None.

Staff present: Assistant City Manager Barry Thompson, City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV, and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Staff absent: City Manager Jack A. Gross

Mayor Shelton opened the meeting and led all present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Shelton declared that the minutes of a regular Council meeting held on September 9, 1997, were approved as distributed.

Mr. Thompson reported on the following items:

U. S. Cellular Phone service mixup in billing. Status: problem has been corrected.

Centerfest '97 will be held on September 27 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Property beside the Bedford Public Library: The Electric Department has removed the telephone pole, the telephone company has removed its equipment, and fall plantings should be on schedule.

Mr. Thompson reported he received a telephone call from Thomas Dick, legislative consultant for the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia (MEPAV). Mr. Dick would like City Council to meet with its legislators, Delegate Lacey Putney and Senator Steve Newman, regarding the electric issues sometime during the month of October.

Mayor Shelton instructed the staff to proceed with arranging this meeting for the second regular Council meeting in October; however, the Mayor indicated that if there is a conflict with the schedules of the legislators, other arrangements will be made.

Councilwoman Kochendarfer and Councilwoman Flood spoke regarding the Blue Ridge Power Agency conference on deregulation of the electric industry which they attended.

The staff is to arrange a session on deregulation of the electric industry after the first of next year.

Councilwoman Kochendarfer spoke regarding the work day held on September 20 at Reynolds Park.

There was a brief discussion regarding Councilman Tharp's upcoming visit to Vierville-sur-Mer, France.

On motion by Councilwoman Kochendarfer, seconded by Councilman Tharp, voted upon and carried unanimously, the following item was added to the agenda:

Resolution in Recognition of and Appreciation for the Contributions

of the Elks National Home to the community of Bedford, Virginia

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following item: Appointment of Joyce W. Abbott as a representative of the Board of Directors of the Central Area Agency on Aging for a three-year term to expire September 30, 2000.

On motion by Councilman Tharp, seconded by Vice Mayor Brookshier, voted upon and carried unanimously, Council adopted the Consent Agenda.

First Sergeant George Dubarry, Sergeant First Class Vince May, and Sergeant James Balderston of the National Guard presented a check to Council in the amount of \$500.00 for the Reynolds Park Project. The money was raised from the 10K run sponsored by the National Guard on September 13, 1997.

Mayor Shelton accepted the check and expressed Council's appreciation for the donation.

Mr. Thompson reported the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia Legislative Committee submitted a draft resolution outlining some of the major deregulation concerns of the municipal electric system. The Legislative Committee is recommending that each of its members adopted the resolution.

Councilman Wandrei moved that the resolution be adopted. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Kochendarfer, voted upon and carried unanimously by the following roll call vote:

Councilman Ballard aye

Vice Mayor Brookshier aye

Councilwoman Flood aye

Councilwoman Kochendarfer aye

Councilman Tharp aye

Councilman Wandrei aye

Mayor Shelton aye

The resolution follows as adopted:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the electric utility industry is undergoing state and federal review for possible deregulation that could affect all power providers and electric customers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and

WHEREAS, the City of Bedford has operated an electric power system since 1909 for the benefit of its citizens, joining other municipalities as the first entities in the state to collectively negotiate for electricity on behalf of residential customers, small businesses and industry, and

WHEREAS, the self-regulation of municipal electric utilities in Virginia has served the public well, allowing local citizens unparalleled control of their own electric rates and service and providing reliable and competitively priced power to its citizens, and

WHEREAS, if deregulation occurs it should be structured to maintain electric system reliability, preserve existing utility service areas to avoid costly and inefficient duplication of facilities, provide for access to sufficient wholesale suppliers of power to afford real choice and reduce market power, and

WHEREAS, local revenues are collected from customers of all electric utilities, including municipal electric system customers, to help fund essential local services and lessen the need for additional state and local tax revenue, and

WHEREAS, while certain state taxes may be collected in the wholesale purchase of power from municipal customers, no municipal service, including - gas, water, sewer, refuse collection or electricity, is presently subject to a direct state tax on its customers.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the City of Bedford urges legislators and regulators to recognize that Virginia is not among the high cost states that have little to lose by moving quickly to retail competition, and the state should proceed slowly and cautiously as it considers moving in this direction; and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the legislature is urged to oppose any direct state tax on any municipal service, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the City of Bedford urges legislators and regulators to work diligently to ensure that all classes of customers, not just those with economic bargaining power, are treated fairly and equally in any deregulation of electric utilities.

Mr. Bill Pickett, Director of the Elks National Home, invited members of Council to attend the annual fall meeting of the Elks Board of Grand Trustees to present the proposed resolution to them.

The Clerk of Council read aloud the following proposed resolution:

RESOLUTION

IN RECOGNITION OF AND APPRECIATION FOR

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ELKS NATIONAL HOME

TO THE COMMUNITY OF BEDFORD, VIRGINIA

WHEREAS, The National Home of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America was established in Bedford, Virginia in 1903; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bedford has contributed to the need, comfort, pleasure and welfare of

the residents of the Elks National Home, and likewise, the residents and staff of the Elks National Home have contributed to the high quality of life in this community; and

WHEREAS, the people of the Bedford area are enriched by their association with the residents, administrators and staff of The Elks National Home; and

WHEREAS, The Elks National Home residents and staff contribute to the cultural, economic and social life in the Bedford area by their volunteer efforts, service to the community and the hospitality demonstrated by the use of the facilities for numerous public ceremonies and events; and

WHEREAS, The Elks National Home enhances the economy and aesthetics of the Bedford community through the provision of jobs, the purchasing power of the Home's operations and its residents, and serving as a tourist attraction for visitors anxious to see and visit this unique, beautiful and historic facility with its well maintained facilities and grounds; and

WHEREAS, the magnificent display of Christmas lights and scenery at The Elks National Home has grown since 1953 from a few lights to an array of thousands of lights which add to the holiday spirit celebrated in Bedford as "The Christmas Capital of Virginia," and draws approximately 23,000 vehicles into the City of Bedford annually; and

WHEREAS, The National D-Day Memorial Foundation has been charged by the Congress and the President of the United States with constructing a National Memorial and Education Complex on a site from which the view will overlook and be enhanced by The Elks National Home complex and grounds;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the citizens of the City of Bedford, through their elected officials, express their deep appreciation to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks for establishing, continuing and supporting its only National Home in Bedford, Virginia, and maintaining and strengthening its ties with this beautiful community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Council of the City of Bedford hereby recognizes the residents, staff and officials of the Elks National Home and the officials with the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks for their outstanding contributions and service to the City of Bedford and the entire community; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, the City of Bedford stands ready to provide its support and assistance to The Elks National Home for continued vibrancy and energy within this community as we move into the 21st century and strongly encourages and promotes the Home's long-standing membership in the Bedford family of solid citizens.

Councilman Tharp moved that the resolution be adopted. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ballard, voted upon and carried unanimously by the following roll call vote:

Vice Mayor Brookshier aye

Councilwoman Flood aye

Councilwoman Kochendarfer aye

Councilman Tharp aye

Councilman Wandrei aye

Councilman Ballard aye

Mayor Shelton aye

Mayor Shelton stated the resolution will be appropriately prepared for a presentation to members of the Elks Board.

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.